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Portland State University
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HOST: Well, I hope that you'll be able to hear. We seriously underestimated the size of the crowd, obviously; but we are certainly very glad to see that all of you came today, particularly for our speaker today who has been with us at Portland State, now for two weeks, will remain through this week, and who has been very gracious in her attendance in our classes, particularly in French Literature and French History class, and has agreed today to speak to us on the question of the French university crisis.

In corresponding with Madame Bernard, I think I had to cajole her into this particular topic, but I must say in talking to her about it in the last couple of weeks, she has done a tremendous amount of work on it. I think you will find her discussion of it very informative. As many of you may know, the literature on this subject in France today is burgeoning and is extraordinarily vast. Unfortunately, in terms of English books dealing with the subject, there are only two or three. So, the information that she has gathered, and can present to you today, is in many ways at this point still unavailable to an English reading audience, and I'm sure that we'll find her comments on the French student crisis in the university system very helpful for understanding the situation, particularly for Americans in a time when our own universities are obviously undergoing the same sort of very necessary reconsideration. So with that, I present to you today, then, Madame Jacqueline Bernard.

[applause]

JACQUELINE BERNARD: Well, first of all, I would like to say that I feel extremely privileged and honored to be speaking here at the occasion of the inauguration of President Wolfe and President Rosenblum, and especially to be speaking after several people who were all particularly qualified in their field. My excuse, I suppose, is that in the field of students' rebellion and something which, for a few days, looked like a revolution, I suppose that nobody can be considered as really qualified, or anybody can. The only experts I can think of are professional agitators, and I don't believe they give public talks, usually. And I think, also, they had nothing to do with the May events in France. So, I shall speak today as someone who observed the events with great interest and sympathy, and who observed them practically from 'round the corner, considering I live just on the outskirts of the Latin Quarter, at the beginning of Montparnasse.

Why do these events seem, to you and to many people, more important than many other student rebellions all through the world? Evidently, because they triggered a general strike in France, and… caused the government to be put into question and to seem to be tottering for a few days. I think there are two sets of reasons for that; the first is constituted by a certain number of facts which are peculiar to France, and the second is a rather extraordinary conjunction of circumstances. Let's see the facts to start with.

First of all, France is an extremely and very exaggeratedly centralized country ever since Napoleon, who had a sense of order after the revolution, which now… it was probably useful at the time, but now it has made things very difficult and rigid. The result is that Paris is really, to an extremely high degree, the center of everything—of administration, of business, of industry—and has a population of over eight million inhabitants now, at the last census, on not quite 50 million, which is about one-sixth of the population… not quite one-sixth of the French population. This fact has been criticized very much, to the extent that an economist's book written a few years ago was titled *Paris and the French Desert*. And, there's also a saying that when—which is more political—that when Paris has fever, and it was rather strong excess of fever last May, all France shivers.

The university suffers from the same centralism in France. As you may know, it's… the university is a national service, like most of the secondary and primary schools. It's financed by the national budget and it's placed under the authority of a ministry of education. Studies are free, and the teachers are paid by the state and are civil servants. This organization has some advantages, but it's extremely rigid, very uniform, and not adapted at all to the rate of progress in our days. It had been strongly criticized for a long time by a great number of teachers and politicians, and most of those who criticize our university also, were also very concerned by the

fact that there's a small percentage, a very low percentage, of workers' children in the university, though studies are free.

So, this was already a rather bad picture that we had in France—most of this university—but the situation has been made very much worse by our population explosion, which took place after World War II, so that the peak of this population explosion arrived in the universities about a year or two ago. And the result is that in 1969, this year, there are 600,000 students in France, where there were only 240,000 five years before in 1964. Among those, 185,000, nearly one-third, are in Paris. It's something like, I believe, practically all of Berkeley, UCLA, and practically all the campuses of California universities, and all that is in Paris, and when I say in Paris, I mean in Paris: plum in the middle of Paris, at least for the main things, the main buildings, which are all around the Sorbonne in the Latin Quarter, on the left bank. When, after World War II, it was felt the Sorbonne and the nearby buildings were not sufficient, new buildings were erected, but all the first ones were quite near, they are within walking distance. Then, a little bit later, two departments are built in a campus style, were built on the outskirts of Paris, one in the south, which is the Science department, in Hauts-de-Seine, and one for Letters and Social Sciences, in the northwest of Paris, on a particularly badly chosen location, which, in one way, was the origin of much of the trouble.

Now, to this background I think I can still add one thing: is that we have a very strong political tradition in France, and though after World War II the students seemed to have a reversal feeling against politics, their stand being towards my generation, "You've messed up things quite enough with your politics and we're not interested at all anymore in politics," but that has changed, and two events have contributed to the change and to the return to the old traditions of taking an interest in politics. First was the Algerian War, where many students were against the Algerian War and took a very firm stand on that, and those students have now become… many of those students have become assistant professors. And then, now, the Vietnam War, which has united the students of the different groups, what we have called the "groupuscule," I mean the journalists who disapproved of them, mainly, because there were some very small political groups—"groupuscule" could be translated by "micro-groups" or something like that—and all these groups who disagreed on lots of things did agree against [the] Vietnam War. Those groups are mainly of Marxist tendencies, but would like to… Marxist, non-communist, if I may say, I mean they are not regular communists; they are against Communis[m] as it's practiced in Russia. One of the groups was called "Young Communist Revolutionaries," that marked the difference with the others which they did not consider as revolutionaries, and most of them try to go back to the sources, to Marx, to Trotsky, to Rosa Luxemburg, to Lenin, and try to evolve a theory which would be better than what the Russians and Stalin have made of Communist.

There's also a strain of anarchism, which has always, always existed in France, and one group which is more or less the group—because they're not very clear, these groups, what was called the 22nd of March Group—which believes that by destroying the structures, and something will evolve, and they don't want to determine what, they think things will evolve by a direct democracy process, and that they shouldn't try and incline it one way or another. So that lots of the people have been considered as sort of utopic communists comparatively to what were called the utopic socialists in the 19th century in France.

Now, let's come to the conjunction of circumstances that made the May events possible. It would be much too long and tedious to tell you all about them—books and books have been published on the subject—so I think I'll come straight to the first major blunder committed by the authorities. That was on May 3rd. That day, the campus of Nanterre, which is northwest of Paris, which I mentioned a few minutes ago, had just been closed owing to disturbances which had been going on, on and off, for some months. And so, the dean of Nanterre closed Nanterre, and on May 3rd, the students of Nanterre decided to hold a meeting in the courtyard of the old Sorbonne. They did, and the director of the university, who directs all the University of Paris, the whole academy of Paris, took fright and called in the police. That was absolutely against a sort of unwritten law that police is not called into academy buildings, and mainly the Sorbonne, and some historian the next day fished out an old story that in 1230, the police had been called into the Sorbonne and that the strike had lasted one year… [laughs] so, you see they definitely don't like it.

But what made things much worse, is the police didn't only clear the courtyard, but packed the students into police buses and took them off, in front of all the others who were walking about in the streets, because the Latin Quarter is full of students, and packed them off to police stations for some checking. That outraged all the student population in Paris, and most of the faculty, because the striking thing is that the faculty has been in this majority with the students. And so it suddenly brought to the extremist group a majority support. The next—immediately, the Sorbonne was closed by the authorities, guarded by police, and during a whole week—because May 3rd was on a Friday and next main events was on May 10th—well, fever mounted with the usual cycle, which you certainly know: demonstration, clashes with the police, students arrested, new demonstrations asking for their release, and then all over again. Well, that lasted for a week, it made things more and more tense. And, little by little, at the end of the week, the movement started to spread to the secondary schools, which we've never seen in France before, and in the lycees, the school boys and girls started to form action committees to go and support the students.

And on May 10th, which was the next Friday, there was a very large demonstration, which started in the south of Paris, Denfert-Rochereau, and ended up in the Latin Quarter, which, anyhow, was more or less isolated by the police, the bridges were guarded, and the idea was not to let the students cross the Seine. So, around seven or eight o'clock at night, the students were back in the Latin Quarter, with the police around the Sorbonne, and in the neighboring streets. And around 9:00, suddenly, a barricade sprung up. That's a very old tradition in France, we've always built barricades, all the revolutions in France have been made with barricades. The authorities had been very thoughtful, the Latin Quarter is still paved with little paving stones, the old ones were a bit larger, so of course they were taken up and were the first material for the barricade, and then, of course, not having any carts, which were usually used in barricades, well, they used automobiles, which were there. [laughs] Which they pushed across the street, and then anything they could find, and they could find quite a lot of things because there's been lots of building going on, and on the building sites, where there lots of boards and all sorts of things which came in rather handy. So, in about an hour, there were literally dozens of barricades—barricades which were probably more symbolic, although the students didn't realize, than practical, because a barricade against a police truck isn't very effective—and they built them, rather curiously, everywhere, so that in some places the students were trapped between two barricades, mainly in the Rue Gay-Lussac.

All the radio networks—the commercial ones—had five or six people on the spot, so that a great number of Parisians, and I was among them, spent their whole night listening to the reporting, which went on continuously, and lots of the dialogue went on on the air, even between the students and some of the authorities… the reporters handing their microphones to one of the representative students to speak to the rector or the vice-rector. Directly, there were talks going on, three students had been admitted to the Sorbonne, but the students had three demands: the release of their arrested comrades, who had been arrested during the week; the reopening of the Sorbonne; and the departure of the police from the Latin Quarter. There again, directly Paris learned the barricades were being built, a great number of members of the faculty went to the Latin Quarter, among whom two who were particularly well-known by the students and who have left sentences, who are two of our scientific Nobel Prize winners, Professor Kastler and Professor Jacques Monod.

Then, as things seemed to be sort of settling, there were discussions on, suddenly, at 2:00 in the morning the order was given to storm the barricades. And nobody knows exactly how, evidently by the police authorities, because the minister of the interior and the minister of education were not possible to find, although journalists were running after them, and from what has been published since, apparently they were discussing about whether they should or should not wake up de Gaulle. They didn't. [laughs] Yes, I would also like to say that while the

barricades were going up, the neighbors were very sympathetic, and they brought down food and drinks to the students. So, there also you see that the fact had created a sort of sentiment for the students and had brought them the support of the population of that part of Paris. Of course, the storming of the barricades was very nasty, lots of people got wounded, and the next morning, practically all Paris was with the students. I went round, walked 'round the neighborhood looking at the damage, and crying a little because the tear gas bomb hadn't evaporated yet, and I didn't hear a single person doing anything else but criticize the police, not even the old ladies. And that morning, the workers joined the students, *L'Humanité,* the communist paper, published—who hadn't been very, very firm in their support of the students—published a special issue with brave titles for the students, and that was the beginning of the workers coming in.

They announced, the workers and the unions, a general strike and a demonstration for the next Monday—this was the Saturday morning—and it happened that the next morning was the 13th of May, which was the 10th anniversary of the return of de Gaulle to power. On the Sunday, Prime Minister Pompidou who was in Afghanistan returned to Paris, and made an appeasing speech promising the reopening of the Sorbonne, the release of the arrested students, and so forth. And, on the Monday afternoon, there was a demonstration right through Paris, north to south, crossing… passing through the Latin Quarter, and where there were both students and workers; and this demonstration, the demonstrators carried firm… that was the first time we were seeing that in Paris for very long time, practically since the Commune, red flags and black flags, often sung L'Anthem Nationale, and their main… there were lots of slogans, but the main one was "Ten years is enough," considering it was ten years after the return of de Gaulle to power.

Then, the Sorbonne was opened, and immediately, the students took possession of all the university buildings—the Sorbonne and all the others—and there was an enormous… you can't call it sit-in, because it was a live-in sort of thing, which lasted for practically one month, the students occupying all the buildings, and having a sort of permanent meeting day and night, in an extraordinarily festive, good-tempered atmosphere. The main slogan, which was repeated in lots of places, was "Forbidden to forbid," "*Interdit d'interdire*," and the main word was "*contestation*," which can be translated, I think, by "challenging" and "questioning." Well, they challenged and questioned everything: the society, the university, anything they could think of; and, it was a sort of explosion of communication in a time where one of the great problems is the difficulty of communicating. Everybody communicated, sometimes they communicated nonsense, but at least they could express themselves. And, it was rather curious, even in the streets when the students sold their papers, there would be whole groups formed discussing: discussing the situation, discussing anything. Some people said it was like a gigantic happening;

others criticized it and said it was more like a psychodrama, and that those students had played at the revolution.

Anyhow, it was something quite extraordinary, and during which lots of very hard work was done by those students who formed committees to study various ideas of reform and produced a considerable number of plans to reform the university. From the very first, they launched an appeal to the young workers to come with them, whether it was on the barricades at the beginning—I mean the first demonstrations—and at the Sorbonne, to come and discuss with them, and a number of young workers did come.

The Sorbonne was reopened on May—well, May 13th in the evening, it was May 14th practically—and on May 15th, the workers of the Renault automobile works near Paris, in Billancourt, started to strike. There was the first rift between the students and the unions: the students went to Billancourt to support the workers, but the unions who consider that the students are irresponsible, that they belong to a certain extent to the establishment, because finally most of them are of middle-class families, and who are much less revolutionary than the students are, the unions kept the doors closed and the only talks were through the bars of the door. Then, the strike started spreading, exactly like the barricades had spread that night, and suddenly, in about three days, we were in presence of a general strike with occupation, which we hadn't had since 1936 and the Popular Front, a strike which was supported by the unions but which was never declared. It did have a certain spontaneous trend to it.

Then, on May 25th, talks were started between… on the national level, like they had been in 1936 during the Popular Front, and curiously enough, one of the delegates of the union had participated in 1936, in the talks, and these talks were started between the employers' federation, the unions… and the unions. They talked, discussed, for 25 hours, after which they produced an agreement; that was on the Sunday 26, and on Monday one of the heads of the unions went to present the agreement to the Renault workers, and was voted down, which was a thing which also hadn't happened for years. They said the agreement wasn't enough. There, for two or three days, there was a feeling that there was no government, that the government was tottering, nobody knew what was going to happen. Things were becoming rather difficult, and a backlash was preparing, though lots of people didn't realize it.

First, a general strike doesn't make things easier for people in a country; the garbage was piling up all along the streets. The food situation wasn't really bad, but some things had become a bit scarce. The banks were closed, so people didn't have money, which was rather inconvenient. Curiously enough, the students, though we're in a country where meals have a very great importance, practically didn't eat during their discussions, they evidently fed them and they

only had sandwiches and whatever they could find; there was no problem there, curiously. But, the other people weren't very pleased, and felt fear mounting with this general strike; and the fact also that the students' demonstrations had continued, and had hardened, and had gone onto the right bank where, one night, the students marched onto the stock exchange and set fire to it, or to a small part of it. That also was more symbolical than practical, but scared the middle-class people conservatives very much.
Then, on May 29th, de Gaulle announced that he was leaving Paris, and he was going to think things over in his country house in the east of France. A lot of people that day thought de Gaulle was going to resign and he was going to prepare his resignation speech. And then, in the middle of the morning, the rumor started to spread that de Gaulle had vanished… [laughs] he hadn't arrived. He'd taken a helicopter and he hadn't arrived in his country place. So, that was a… all the journalists started rushing around to try and find de Gaulle, and as a matter of fact, from the books which are being published lately, the ministers did the same. Finally the minister, I think, of armament found out where the helicopters had gone; de Gaulle had gone to visit Master General Messmer, because he wanted to know whether the army was sure and safe and whether there'd been any trouble there.

And then he returned to Colombey-les-Deux-Églises, and announced he would make a speech on the next day which was the 30th, and then in the afternoon of the 30th, he made an extremely vigorous speech quite different from the one he had made four or five days before, which had been extreme… of which the students had said, because he'd been, he denounced it for three weeks, that de Gaulle had said it had taken three weeks to say in five minutes that in one month's time he would start doing what he'd been unable to do during 10 years, that was their definition. But the next speech was quite different, was very vigorous, and announced the dissolving of the assembly, new elections, and at the same time—very well organized—there was an extremely large demonstration on the Champs-Élysées, which was the Gaullist demonstration, the response to the students' and workers' demonstration of May 13th, with red and white and blue flag, the Marseillaise, and also about one million people, which was about the estimated number of the 13th of May demonstration.

So, that day—well, the main thing was over, the tide had changed, but occasion… a revolution, if it had ever existed, because I think the students triggered something much bigger than they expected. There was finally no one to take over, the parties of the Left were very weak and showed that they were very weak at that time, and… well, in my opinion, I know I don't agree with the 22nd of March people, I don't think you'd get the revolution if there isn't somebody to take over, the power.

Now, so you see it's the facts in France and those circumstances, those two blunders which made—and the fact that the workers came in—which made the May events in France seem much more important and taken national importance and made them much more important than most other countries. Basically, the reasons for the students' unrest in France is the same as in all other countries. Of course, they have better reasons to complain against the organization and the methods that the university, which were completely outdated, and which nobody had really changed completely. The old teachers being very conservative and always sort of saying, "My class cannot be changed, they must learn this, and what will happen if they're not taught the Crusades in the usual way?" and that sort of thing, that I think exists more or less everywhere. But, the young assistants and the young teachers were not at all of that opinion. Also, we had very old methods; the courses were delivered from the chair without any questions, there was no dialogue; anyhow a dialogue would have been very difficult because there were many too many people in each class, every class was overcrowded, and we still had a very depressing system of cramming and yearly exams, which made the students near have practically nervous breakdowns at the exam time, and their families definitely had nervous breakdowns [laughs] at the exam time.

But, at the heart of the matter, it wasn't that. At the heart of the matter, I think in France, like everywhere else, the young are dissatisfied about our society and the way we live. Of course, the main slogan was that they challenged and questioned the consumer society, and it's certainly only a small number of students really questioned the consumer society—when it comes to buying, to getting a sports car, they don't challenge it at all. But finally, there is an unrest, there is a feeling that this consumer society is sort of developing in a sort of void and pushing us to buy gadgets which are really not necessary. And, so, they do get the support of the other students, directly the circumstances are favorable, which was the case. Also, all the active groups have felt very deeply that they can do nothing without the support of the working class, and there the situation is difficult because, now, the May events being over, their relations with the unions are getting more and more strained. They probably have been able to get in touch with a certain number of young workers, and we've had a certain number of strikes which were not declared by the unions in these last months, but the important thing is that the goals of the working class and the goals of the students are not the same, the students are finally a privileged group, a marginal group, as Marcuse has shown, and… I don't think he was very read by the students in France but he was certainly read by the teachers, and he'd had an influence on the German events and there was a link between the German students and the French ones. So, their relationship with the workers becoming not… becoming rather strained and difficult for the time being. As concerns the university, the students have certainly obtained a very great victory, though the active groups say they're not interested and it's a fake victory, *victoire bidoncle*, they say [laughs], not the… which is slang.

First, there's been enormous change in atmosphere, these classes with no dialogue don't exist anymore, and anyhow, with students being allowed to dialogue, they dialogue very strongly, they challenge everything, so that now even some of the teachers who were very much for the students are getting completely exhausted. [laughs] There are quite a lot of serious articles about the problem with teachers; I believe that will die down. The change has gained the secondary schools, where also there's been quite a lot of trouble, and the atmosphere has changed. From a legal point of view, the new minister of education in the Gaullist government, which was changed after the elections had brought in an immense—in June—an immense majority of Gaullists, is Edgar Faure, who is an extremely clever man, and who is clever enough to realize that it was no good making those small changes that everybody had made before, and that the radical changes were necessary. So, he has promoted and… seen… reform, which was voted with a few modifications, despite quite big opposition in his own party, and this reform, which is called the Orientation Law for universities breaks up our old rigid universities into much smaller units, which are much more flexible, and in which there will be some interdisciplinary teaching, which was practically impossible before. Before, you had to choose, you did a law degree, or economics, or science, but you couldn't mix them, and finally you need science for sociology and linguistics demands quite a lot of mathematics nowadays.

So, that has been changed. And these new units, and that's the important thing, are going to be run by councils in which the students and the faculty will each have one-third of representatives. That's completely new, it is giving the students the power, perhaps not to run their university entirely, but to have a say in the run of their university. What has been very questioned is that the third part, the third third of these councils will be made up of personalities representing general interests. This, that activist students have translated by "the establishment," so that they are very much against, and they're so very much against the whole system that the activists have boycotted the elections of the students of these new councils. But, their boycott has not been very effective, in fact, the number of students who voted was fairly high. And, there was… there were rumors and feelings that the students had… the activist students had realized this boycott was not a very clever measure, they would have been better… it would have been better that they should have got in the council. The majority of students who have been elected were of a left, communistic tendency, and the council is only starting to function.

Of course all of this is only a framework. In this framework, the university can become very much better or can return to its old bad habits, just like in schools, in secondary schools where everything was noted from one to twenty, every essay of any students. They've stopped that system and installed a system of classing the students in five groups, A, B, C, D, E, but some of

the teachers manage with some A pluses and some B minus, and me minus minus, to return to the 1-20 classification, but there also is only the practice which will show whether the reform is effective or not. The point of view of all the activist—the active groups, the extreme left groups—is that, anyhow, even if the reform was good, they are not interested, because their point of view, which I think quite logical, is that a university, however good it is, can only reflect the society in which it is, and that considering they're not satisfied with the society, what they want to change is that: is the society, and if the society is better it'll have a better university.

So, they sort of have a more revolutionary point of view, but a less student point of view. For them, the student problem amongst teaching has become secondary. At the beginning of the academic year this year, which started late because of this reform, they have been creating… they created quite a lot of disorders in the universities. I think there has been a small reversal of feeling among their comrades, and they found it was bad tactics, so the last trouble before I left, they'd used a hunger strike as a method to obtain what they wanted, and they did, so they seem to be changing a bit, too. Of course, this reform of the university requires more money, more teachers, more buildings, and it happens to be made in a period of financial restrictions, so that it isn't very easy, and Edgar Faure, education minister, has had to fight very much to get enough credit or to get more credits, budgetary funds, and still has not enough. Also, it's evidently reform which has been made upside-down; the logical thing would have been to start by the primary schools and the secondary, and then to go up to the top, but the events have forced the government to do it the other way around.

Now, finally, what have these May events shown? I think the main thing they've shown, and that the students are very firm on, is that anything can happen. For years, the feeling was you couldn't change a government; you couldn't do anything except by the legal ways, and the legal ways like the elections and all that were usually didn't bring about much changes. There, they've had the feeling of a power, and that, for them, is extremely important. But, finally, the problem is the same as here, and is a deeper problem, and curiously enough it's André Malraux, who's minister of the culture in… of culture in the de Gaulle government, and has been… has always been one of de Gaulle's ministers, and he drew a rather curious conclusion for a man who belongs to the government—but he's always the *enfant terrible* of the government—and he was interviewed in June, so that was quite early, and he pointed out that finally, it was a crisis of civilization; without civilization… and there, I think he will join the article by Professor Ward who is going to speak tomorrow—he said it's first civilization in history which has no religious basis, which isn't founded on a religion, and the first which has the power to destroy itself. And, this civilization hasn't found its significance. Progress, material progress, is not a sufficient… as significant, and that is the tragedy of our time. And Malraux remarked very bluntly at the end of this interview, which was given on television—no, on radio—that however

well universities can be organized, the problem will not be solved; that things have a much deeper nature. And, in this, I think he agrees with what was one of the students' slogans right from the beginning, which was, "It is only a beginning, let's go on with our fight." "*Ce n'est qu'un début, continuons notre combat*," which one clapped in one's hands and with the rhythm.

And, I think that your generation has, all over the world, begun also, it's only a beginning, to feel there's something wrong in the society in which we live. And, of course, your first reaction and our first reaction, our students', has been to revolt against it in a manner which has been mainly negative. Personally, I hope that soon the students, whether it's in the United States, in France, in Germany, in Japan or elsewhere, will start having some constructive ideas about how to make our civilization more satisfactory. And I also hope that by untimely disorders, they don't open the door to the type of armies and generals and captains or colonels who often walk in and turn into dictators when there's a bit too much trouble, in the name of order. If anybody has any questions, I can try and answer.

[applause] [indistinct talking between Bernard and host]

HOST: We'll take two or three minutes, and if any of you have to leave, if you'd do that now, and then Madame Bernard will answer some questions after that. [to Bernard] And, I think I'll let you…

BERNARD: [laughs] I'll try. Yes?

QUESTION: [very quietly; off microphone] Do you have […] information about… ?

BERNARD: Well, I'm afraid I haven't got very much information because I haven't had any French papers since I'm over here. Well you know de Gaulle made a speech the other day saying that if the referendum, if he didn't get the majority he'd quit; that he's done very often before when there was a referendum. You know, it isn't something so very important, and I think the great question in this referendum is that people are not very interested, it's too complicated. You see, one of the questions, at least, one of the parts of the referendum is a reform which is against the centralism which everybody has been complaining about, because it gives many more powers to the regions; and the second part of the referendum proposes a reform of the senate, which is the second assembly, which will only have a consultative role. It didn't have a such a very important role before, and anyhow I don't think people… I mean the people vote, every voter is so very interested. It's too complicated. What lots of people, I mean the people who are against the referendum are mainly against it because we ask… there are two questions and we can only give one answer, so we think that is not very practical.

And secondly, that it's the type of reform which is exactly what should have been discussed by an assembly because it's the details that count, it's a sort of complicated law, a new law, in which perhaps… which should have been perhaps altered in details, and that would have been managed perhaps not badly in an assembly. And it seems to a great many French people that the answer by yes or no is rather simple. You know that even the right-wing independent members of the independent party who support de Gaulle with have been answering "Yes, but…" for a very long time [laughs] to most of the de Gaulle policy, and I think lots of French people would like to answer "Yes, but" or "No, but…" and lots of them, if it's a fine Sunday, will probably just go to the country. And that, I think, is the great question. I don't think there'd be such a minority but perhaps not a very great number of people voting, and I think that's why de Gaulle has dramatized the issue, I mean that's what the journalists were expecting when I left, by saying, "If I don't get enough votes, I'll resign." Apparently, the press has been very much against, from what I read in the *Oregonian*, who mentioned some, I think, rather secondary papers… [audience laughs] but from the paper I got this morning—in France… [audience applauds] they mentioned *Paris-Jour* which is the tabloid. And… but apparently from a letter I got this morning, *Le Monde*, which is the main paper in France, has a very severe article by its editor, who only writes on very important occasions. And which is against, but that doesn't mean that the vote won't go through.

QUESTION: [inaudible, in background]

BERNARD: Well, I've read a lot… I think the one which analyzes the problem and explained why it all started at Nanterre, among—which is at campus, near Paris—among mainly the students of sociology, the campus being between an shanty town, where the Portuguese workers have taken the place which the Algerian workers occupied a few years ago, and on the other side of the campus there the Simca Automobile works. Well, the students in the sociology department, after a few classes, started to say, "Well, what about a bit of real sociology looking around here?" And that was more or less the beginning of the unrest in Nanterre, especially that Nanterre was… had also lots of other faults, it was quite far from Paris, had very bad communication, was supposed to be a campus but as the funds, the budgetary funds were not large enough, they'd been going on building for month and months so it looked much more like a building site than a campus, it was much more muddy than grassy.

And then for the students in Nanterre, which have a quite a different point of view from the students here in the States, who usually, many of them live at home and study at the Sorbonne but do not live there, they had the feeling, the communication being bad, that they were sort of shut up in a sort of ghetto. You know, the cafes of the Boulevard St. Michel are part of the

university finally, our cafeterias are probably not very good, but at least you can go and work in the nearby cafe. And there, in Nanterre, there was nothing, it was far from everything. And, that's where the explosion took place, it was a sort of brewing pot; and the best book, I think, is by one of the sociology teachers of Nanterre, it's called "*Ces idées qui ont ébranlé la France*," "These ideas which shook France," it's signed "Epistemon," which is a pseudonym for a man called Anzieu. I think it analyzes the causes better than any other that I've read up to now. I think there've been 45, you know, and I'm not quite sure, there have been a few more since I've left.

QUESTION: Is it possible for you to be more specific on the reforms of the orientation of the Sorbonne, are you familiar with it enough…

BERNARD: Well, the main thing was to create, in these units, the […] disciplinary studies, where one main, dominant subject and two sub-dominants, among which the students can choose. But then, that is very new, and in some cases the units, which have been cut up up to now only on a temporary basis. The new councils can change them for next year, if they decide to, but in lots of cases they have reverted to the old divisions of law and economics and that sort of thing. One of the reasons is that lots of people would like to do some sociology, but everybody is scared of the sociologists because of the Nanterre business, so nobody wants to have sociologists around, history all around, lots of things.

And, the new units are working well if they're well-run, if they have a good man at the head of them, and are working not as well in other cases, even if the buildings are good. For instance in Vincenne, near Paris, where very nice buildings and campus has been built during the summer, which proves that it can be done when they want to do it, it's working rather badly. And in the old NATO buildings, which have been turned over to the ministry of education… law and languages, is working rather well. The idea, also, is that there should be languages everywhere, in all the units. So, that I think only the experience will show. Things are easier among science students, first because they work harder and they're more serious about their work, and the problems are mainly among the students of literature and philosophy and sociology, who have a rather contradictory point of view, because on one hand they complain that the studies they make do not prepare them for jobs, and on the other hand they say that the universities only supply a technocratic society, the technocrats that […] So, you see there's a rather contradictory feeling there. So, practically, in law, economics, it doesn't work too badly, in letters it's rather uncertain, in medicine it's been a complete failure. The old, important doctors which had been practically plucked out during May have all come back, and that everybody agrees that it's a… it's a failure. Well, they say they'll have to start again.

[applause]

[program ends]